

Buchwald's Column

Guess Who's a Spy?

By Art Buchwald

PARIS.

The following paragraph has just appeared in the anti-Soviet newsletter called "Soviet Survey," which monitors Russian newspapers and magazines:

"Art Buchwald, the New York Herald Tribune columnist, has become the favorite of Soviet editors in recent months. At least a dozen of his columns have been reprinted in the Soviet press, and one in particular, recommending that Kennedy's Peace Corps be sent to the Riviera has been given wide publicity."

Now some people, not in the know, might think this is a bad thing, and on the surface it looks like it is, particularly since the editors lift the stuff right out of the paper without permission and, what's worse, they don't pay for it.

But anyone who has had dealings with us knows how anti-Communist we are. For one thing our seven-year-old son is one of the founders of the John Birch Society in Paris. When he plays cowboys he makes no distinction between Red Indians and Red white men.

For another thing, we're so sensitive about Reds, Leftingers and fellow travelers that we once had our wife blackballed from the Screen Writers Guild when we discovered she saw "Song of Russia" during the war.

When we came to Russia several years ago we kept pointing "U. S. S. R. Go Home" signs all over Czechoslovakia and Poland, which caused a great deal of embarrassment in high government circles.

But our best coup to date has been getting the Soviet press to use our articles. Because what they don't know is that our columns, which look very innocent on the surface, are actually written in code. Every fifth

word is a secret message to one of our agents in the Soviet Union. They read "Izvestia" and "Pravda" religiously for our columns now to get their instructions from Allen Dulles.

For example, the Kennedy Peace Corps column, which was so widely disseminated in the Soviet Union, and was even read on the Moscow radio, was in fact a code to our people there which said: "Find out when the Russians are going to send a man up in space."

Thanks to the Russian editors and radio people, the C. I. A. was able to get the information a month in advance of the event, and when the Russians said they launched Yuri Gagarin in orbit, our intelligence people had all the information, which astonished other countries, but came as no surprise to the United States.

Proof of this was that when the public relations officer for the American astronauts was awakened at 3 o'clock in the morning, and asked for comment on the Russian event, he was quoted as saying: "If you want anything from us, you jerk, the answer is we're all asleep."

We can't reveal what other messages laid to our agents. Some of them are still being decoded, but all we can say is that having the Russians pick up our columns has been the most efficient and fastest method of contacting our people in the U. S. S. R. that the C. I. A. has ever devised.

There is a very important message concerning Lady in this column and all we can hope and pray is that the editors of "Pravda" and "Izvestia" reprint it because the sooner our people can decode it, the happier everyone in Washington will be.

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Art Buchwald's column also appears in the Sunday Herald Tribune's Open Arts Section.